

# Truman Intervenes in Feud Of Rhee and Korea Assembly

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By The United Press.

**WASHINGTON.** June 3—President Truman has intervened in South Korea's new Government crisis for fear that the bitter dispute may throw new roadblocks in the path of the Korean truce. Diplomatic sources said

Mr. Truman took the unusual step of sending a personal note to Korean President Syngman Rhee expressing "shock" at Dr. Rhee's feud with the South Korean National Assembly.

The President's message was prompted by growing concern over the possible impact of the crisis on the Korean war and the truce talks at Panmunjom. It emphasized the seriousness of the internal dissension and noted the stake of the United States and the United Nations in the young Republic.

#### Envoy's Vacation Cut Short

Joseph Short, White House press secretary, announced that Mr. Truman had ordered Ambassador John J. Muccio to cut short his vacation in the United States and return to his post. He declined to talk about the note. In reply to questions he said:

"Ambassador Muccio left yesterday to return to Korea. The President discussed fully with the Ambassador his concern over the domestic situation in the Republic of Korea and instructed Mr. Muccio as to the attitude of this Government. It is not appropriate to comment on these instructions at this time."

Mr. Muccio conferred with Mr. Truman last Thursday.

Informed sources said the note made no demands, but expressed grave concern at what was happening in the new Korean Republic that the United States and the United Nations were fighting to keep free.

The United States is afraid the political feud may play into the hands of Communist propagandists, who already are having a field day with the Koje prison camp incidents.

Dr. Rhee has jailed twelve of the Assemblymen and clamped martial law on Pusan, the capital. Their colleagues have charged Dr. Rhee with trying to keep them from vot-

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ing him out of power when they elect a new President next month.

The United States already has tried discreetly, through the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea, to persuade President Rhee to go easy.

Officials have cautioned him against flouting the Korean Constitution, which requires Presidential elections by the Assembly. Any denial of constitutional provision, they said, would lay the Government open to Communist charges that it is undemocratic.

This would offer the Reds a new possible pretext for aggression against South Korea. It also would provide ammunition for propaganda attacks at the truce conference table at Panmunjom.

Dr. Rhee, who always has presented a problem for American diplomats, is fighting to retain his position as head of the new republic. Since he faced almost certain defeat from a hostile Assembly, he has been accused of trying to strip it of its powers and carry his case directly to the Korean people.

Diplomats here admit that Dr. Rhee, in spite of strong-arm tendencies, remains one of the few

leaders capable of running the Korean Government. But they said it would prove disastrous to condone undemocratic, autocratic measures to keep him in power.

#### Compromise Move Reported

**Pusan, Korea, Wednesday, June 4 (P)**—No one would say that President Truman's note caused President Rhee to stay his hand, but it was learned that Dr. Rhee had held up an order to dissolve the National Assembly and would try to reach a compromise with his political opponents.

Eleven of the arrested Assemblymen have been charged with being involved in a Communist plot against the Rhee Government. United Nations sources call this window dressing and say it is simply a struggle for political power.

The Assembly was stalled Tuesday when fifty-two pro-Rhee Assemblymen withdrew. In addition to the twelve opposition Assemblymen under arrest, twenty to thirty were in hiding. Only seventy-three of the 183-member Assembly showed up.

Sources close to Dr. Rhee had said the President planned to dissolve the Assembly even without constitutional authority because "the will of the people is more important than the letter of the Constitution."